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2023-24 INTL Proposal
submitted October 2023

As we move away from the sun **submitted by: Fatma Hendawy**

Artists find new ways to represent their work and practices as they find themselves integrating into new communities after experiencing displacement. Sometimes the process of integration requires compromising one's own identity. The precarious state of integration resonates with what some invasive plants can do to adapt to new environments. In order to survive, some plants can change their properties, undergoing a mutation that affects both its nature and form. I am interested in investigating the metaphor of mutated forms and bodies enduring the journey of immigration and adaptation as a means of survival. *As we move away from the sun* explores topics of migration, displacement, and adaptation with a focus on the inextricable connections between human and plant migration. This exhibition invites the audiences to engage with questions of how people can come to resemble plants while adapting to a new country and culture, and how the shift of one's identity can be affected by the rigid integration processes inherited from western colonial systems. The artworks selected for this exhibition interweave the aesthetics of natural materials with the mutation of culture and identity that the artists imply through their creative processes. The exhibition at its core considers how artists utilize natural/organic aesthetic forms that embrace creative metaphors for experiences of adaptation and survival, utilizing research-based methodologies.

From immigration, adaptation, plants, and language, the audiences will engage and relate to each artwork through their personal experience with immigration. I aim to create a space in which audiences from the diaspora can relate to a story, a plant, a song, a text or even a scent. A space where artists and audiences can exchange knowledge and relate to similar experiences of immigration and adaptation in new places and contexts.

The exhibition commissioned a multimedia installation by an artist whose research on the plantation and industry of Jasmine in Egypt and the resilience of *Monotropas* in Ontario, interweaves a story of her personal experience with immigration and living between Egypt and Canada for over a decade. Another artist will be showing glass sculptures and paintings, her work addresses the discriminatory immigration systems in the global North and how it is based on a skin colour discrimination. She draws analogies between immigration systems, colonial histories and migrating plants.

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A third artist's interactive installation is a cactus plant that is connected to a canvas weaving machine, in which the colours printed on the canvas change as the cactus is exposed to the sun. In this process combining nature and technology, and a deep connection to the sun, the installation manifests how observing plants through technology can be a way of learning from plants and how they survive and interact with their surroundings.

The public program includes a performance lecture a renowned Egyptian writer who has been living in exile in the United States after his imprisonment in Egypt. As well as a musical performance by a renowned Lebanese rapper famous for his critical lyrics about issues of identity and the ongoing immigration crisis.

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